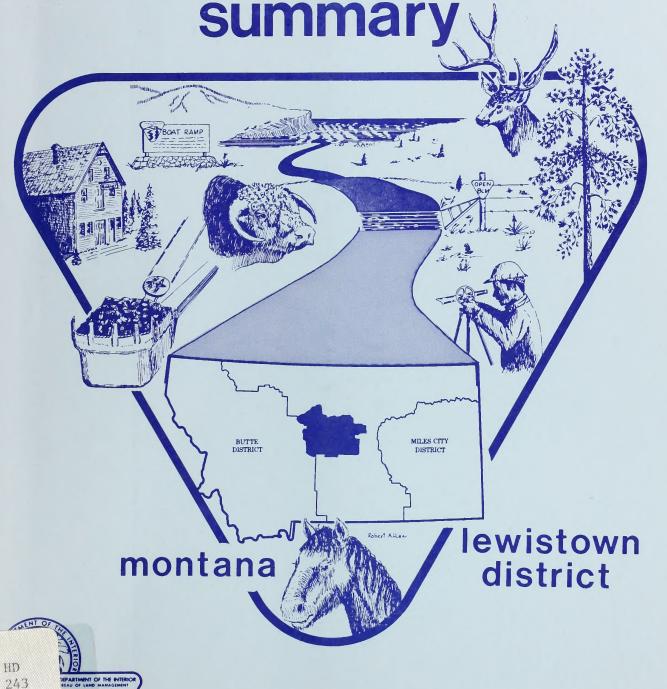
beit mountains/fergus MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN



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A COMBINED SUMMARY OF THE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLANS FOR THE

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BELT MOUNTAINS

AND

FERGUS

PLANNING UNITS

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U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management Montana State Office Lewistown District Judith Resource Area

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The Bureau of Land Management's Montana State organization manages resources on almost 8.4 million acres of surface land and 55 million acres of subsurface minerals in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The Lewistown District Office is responsible for more than 3.8 million surface and 8.1 million subsurface acres. These public lands are used by many people for a variety of activities. It is BLM's responsibility to develop coordinated land use allocations specifying the guidelines, constraints, and criteria for the utilization or protection of the public's resources.

To better prepare for present and future demands on public lands, BLM has developed land use plans for many areas of the state. This publication contains a summary of the land use decisions for approximately 4,349,000 acres of public lands in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units.

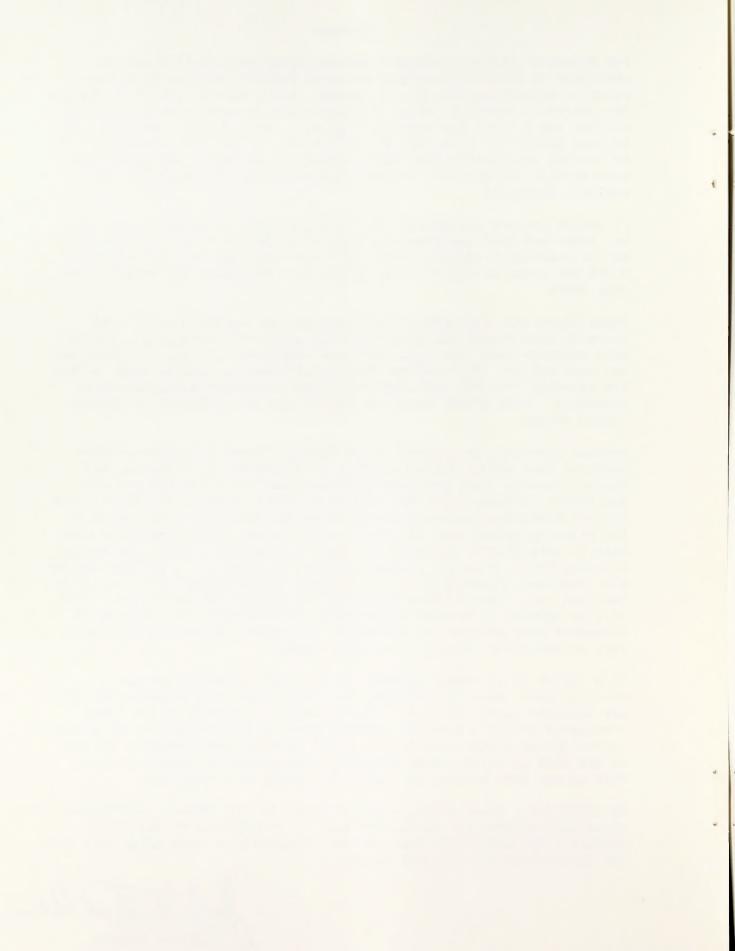
These decisions, the approved multiple use recommendations of BLM resource specialists and managers, were made after gathering all available resource data, and requesting the viewpoints of local citizens and the user public. Each rancher with an allotment on public lands within the planning unit was contacted during the allotment management plan inventory. Most of the tracts of public land were subject to on-the-ground review.

Several agencies, including Montana Fish and Game, Soil Conservation Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Judith Basin, Chouteau, and Fergus Counties, have furnished data and assistance in this project. Additional valuable input has been obtained by incidental contacts with various interested resource users during the course of development of the planning system over the last several years. Public meetings were held in 1974 in Roy, Winifred, Ft. Benton, and Lewistown in the Fergus Planning Unit. A public meeting was held in Great Falls in 1976 for the Belt Mountains Planning Unit. By design, the decisions are flexible so they can deal with new demands or new conditions that may arise. They will be updated or revised as necessary to help keep this management framework plan current and effective. Any major changes in this plan will be subject to public review and comment.

This report is a summary document of the total planning process. Detailed maps, physical resource data, and social and economic data are not included in this report. These materials, as well as the other components of BLM's land use planning process, are available for public review during regular business hours at the Lewistown District Office. If you wish to review these documents, please make an appointment so that we can have someone available to discuss them with you.

My staff and I thank everyone who assisted in this effort, especially those who attended our public meetings or contributed to the final product. The assistance received was invaluable in developing this plan and formulating the final decisions.

John F. Fields
District Manager



Introduction

BLM Planning System

Under the Bureau's planning system, detailed information is gathered and management decisions are developed in eight categories. These categories are lands, minerals, timber, range, watershed, wildlife habitat, recreation, and cultural resources. In order to meet the needs of its diverse public land users, BLM must effectively balance the management of these resources. Under the concept of multiple use management, all potential uses of the public's resources are evaluated before a final management plan is developed and implemented.

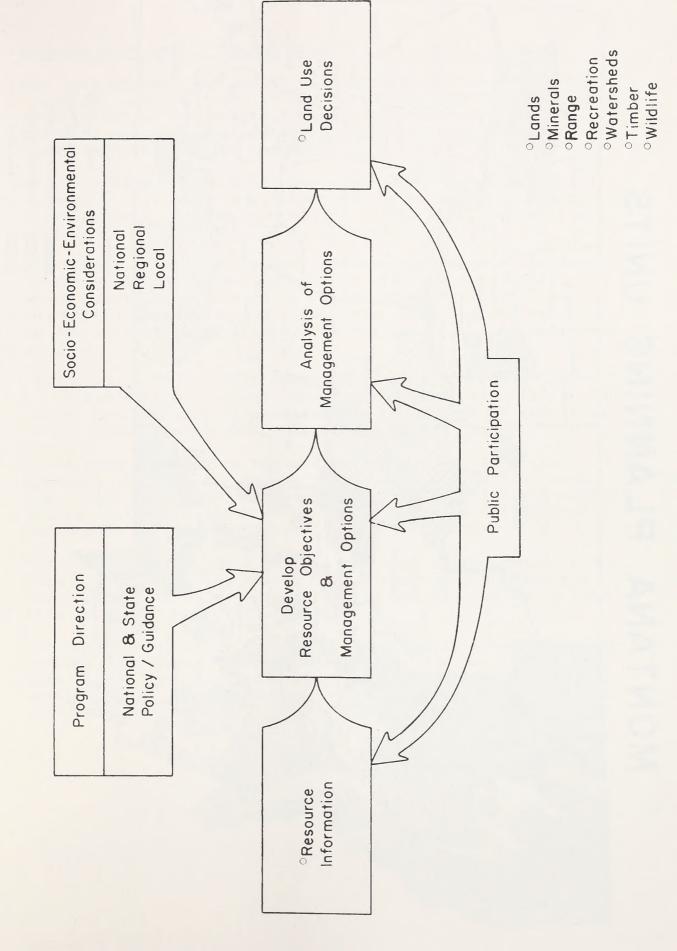
The Bureau of Land Management has developed its land use planning system with three major components:

Program Direction Resource Information Management Decisions

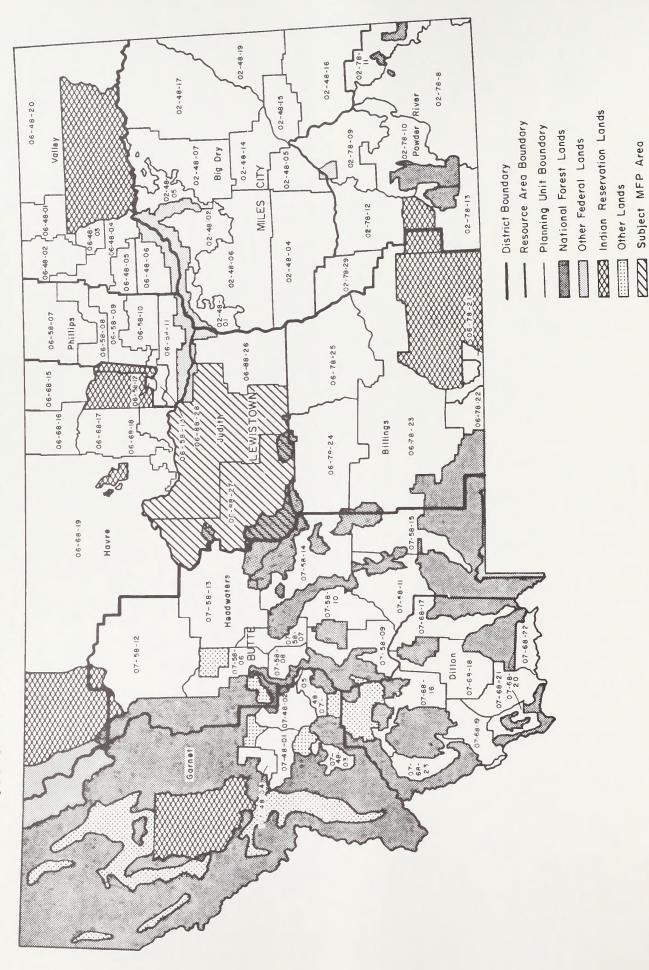
- 1. Program Direction. General program direction, policies, goals, and priorities are set by the President, Congress, and the Secretary of the Interior. These directions are expressed in executive orders, laws, regulations, and other documents.
- 2. Resource Information. In initiating this phase of the planning system, BLM specialists gather all of the available land and resource information relative to the region under study. Each resource specialist -- the forester, range conservationist, minerals specialist, watershed specialist, etc .-- studies the planning area to determine current condition, use, trends, and problems concerning his resource responsibility. This analysis is then further developed to identify maximum potential for the resource use without consideration of competing or conflicting uses. The importance of this step is that each potential is considered individually. addition, socio-economic data is gathered and analyzed to facilitate the evaluation of land use alternatives generated by the planning system. In compiling the above information, the Bureau contacts all known interests to be certain that all available data has been obtained.

Management Decisions. The next phase of the planning 3. system is designed to resolve resource use conflicts and to provide basic quidelines for the use and management of the public lands under study. This is the heart of the planning system. At this stage, each resource specialist prepares objectives and outlines specific proposals for the optimum use of his resource based on current technology, Bureau guidelines, and the socio-economic needs of the region. Each individual resource proposal is then fully documented and individually presented utilizing a map and overlay system. At this point, conflicts between various resource proposals and possible multiple use solutions are identified through careful analysis and utilization of narratives, maps, and overlays. Based on comments and information received through public participation, BLM managers are often able to develop modified as well as additional land use alternatives and multiple use solutions. The impacts of each of these alternatives are identified and analyzed to facilitate the selection of the best mix of uses. A comprehensive land use plan is then developed and adopted. Coordinated land use allocations, quidelines, constraints, and criteria for utilization are intrinsic to this plan.

B.L.M. PLANNING SYSTEM



MONTANA PLANNING UNITS



General Description of the Area

The Belt Mountains Planning Unit consists of land in three counties: Judith Basin, Fergus, and Chouteau. Judith Basin County lies almost entirely within the boundaries of the planning unit, whereas relatively smaller portions of the other two counties are included.

Stanford (population 615), the county seat of Judith Basin County, is the major population center of the Belt Mountains Planning Unit. Other communities in the area are small and include Moore, Hobson, Utica, and Denton.

The Bureau of Land Management administers roughly one percent of the lands in the Belt Mountains Planning Unit. Most of these public lands lie along the mountain-foothill area of the Little Belt Mountains. The major land use and industry in the unit is agricultural (see general locations map, page 4).

The Fergus Planning Unit consists of most of Fergus County, southeast Chouteau County, and a small part of northeast Judith Basin County. Approximately 14 percent of this area is BLM administered public land (see table, page 7).

Elevations in the unit range from 2,300 feet along the Missouri River to 6,428 feet at the summit of Judith Peak in the Judith Mountains. Vegetation varies from thickly wooded slopes in the mountains to open pine parks in the foothills and breaks to sagebrush-grassland on the plains.

Lewistown, population 7,408, is the only urban area in the Fergus Planning Unit. Other communities include Winifred, Roy, and Grass Range. Population is sparse, averaging less than two persons per square mile.

The major industry is agriculture, primarily based on cattle ranching and wheat farming. A considerable amount of alfalfa hay is raised to support the livestock industry. There is great recreation potential, not yet fully realized, along the Missouri River and in the mountains.

Major Issues and Problems

The major environmental problem is the control of livestock grazing through implementation of allotment management plans. Overgrazing contributes to deterioration of practically all resources and range improvements often conflict with other resource values, particularly wildlife habitat. This issue reached national significance several years ago with NRDC vs. Morton court case which defined livestock grazing as a major environmental impact. This decision had directed the preparation of environmental statements to assess impacts to the public land. The "Missouri Breaks Grazing Environmental Statement" covering these planning units is scheduled for completion in August 1979.

Other issues and/or problems that surfaced from public input were control vs. non-control of predators and prairie dogs, sagebrush chemical control as opposed to sagebrush retention for wildlife, off-road vehicle use, and oil and gas development in specific areas such as along the Missouri River.

Socio-economic issues include the expenditure of additional public funds on projects to implement proposed allotment management plans (AMPs) and the associated increase in costs of maintenance and range supervision.



The Missouri River, pictured here at the mouth of Dog Creek in Fergus County, forms the northern border of the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units. A 149 mile stretch of the Missouri bordering the planning units is included in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Background

Land ownership in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units, as shown on the base maps, consists of a mixture of private, state, and federal lands.

LAND OWNERSHIP
BELT MOUNTAINS/FERGUS PLANNING UNITS

	ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY	ACREAGE	% OF TOTAL ACREAGE
PUBLIC	Bureau of Land Mgmt.		
Belt Mountains		18,674	1
Fergus		387,695	14
PRIVATE	Private		
Belt Mountains		1,482,982	88
Fergus		2,086,880	78
STATE	State of Montana		
Belt Mountains		169,378	11
Fergus		203,398	8
TOTALS		4,349,007	100%

Since the enactment of Public Law 94-223, lands within the boundary of the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge are administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service. These lands are not included in the Fergus Planning Unit.

BLM's land program is responsible for the administration of public land laws. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) has provided the Bureau with directives for administering these laws.

The lands program supports BLM resource management programs, as well as those of local, state, and other federal agencies. Lands with unusual values may be designated for specific program purposes. An example would be the designation of Square Butte as a natural area. Lands are also withdrawn for recreation development and preservation of wilderness, cultural, or historic values. BLM also provides lands for community expansion and other public purposes.

Lands program activities include such actions as: planning, classification, appraisal, exchanges, sales, land record maintenance, administration of leases, rights-of-way, and land use permits.

As no comprehensive land use plans have been developed by the three counties involved (Judith Basin, Chouteau, Fergus), BLM will continue to work with county officials to maintain consistent land decisions. Should local county-wide planning be initiated, BLM, if requested, will support and participate in the effort to help insure coordinated management direction and use of private, state, and public lands.

Lands Resource Decision and Rationale (partial listing)

Belt_Mountains/Fergus

1. Disposal

a. Dispose, by exchange, small isolated tracts of public land with no significant public value.

According to FLPMA, "the public lands shall be retained in federal ownership, unless as a result of land use planning procedures . . . it is determined that disposal of a particular parcel will serve the national interests."

2. Lands Rights-of-Way

a. Allow issuance of rights-of-ways but only after it is determined that aesthetic values will not be degraded. Rights-of-way corridors should be considered in the scenic and recreation corridors of the Missouri River.

It is the responsibility of BLM not only to allow rights-of-way but also provide an environment that is not unduly degraded or marred so that it will be distasteful to users of public land.

Belt_Mountains

a. Retain those public lands adjacent to the Missouri River and in the riverbreaks between Highwood Creek and Fort Benton.

These lands are highly erodible and are very steep. They lie in the Missouri River watershed and pollution from these lands could contaminate the river water. These lands are not physically suitable for residential use. There is no county or state zoning in this area and none is foreseeable.

b. Provide for a vigorous exchange program to increase public acreage adjacent to the Missouri River in this planning unit.

The segment of the Missouri River from Fort Benton to the Robinson Bridge has been designated as a component of the National Wild and Scenic River System. Most of the land is in private ownership; however, there are numerous parcels adjacent to the river that are federally owned. It would be desirable to obtain additional private land for an effective management program. This can best be accomplished by exchanging public lands for desirable private lands.

Fergus

a. Obtain legal access for tracts having high public value.

Many of the lands in the Judith and Moccasin Mountains and numerous small tracts in this unit do not have legal access. Legal access is necessary for the public to fully enjoy resources on public lands.

Environmental Overview

Concentrating utility rights-of-way and transmission lines into corridors would prevent many of the negative impacts associated with intrusions into largely undisturbed areas. Disposal of isolated tracts by exchange rather than sale will provide additional public value lands.

MINERALS

Background

The minerals program includes the development of minerals by lease, license, or permit; coordination of minerals development with other land uses; the assurance of rehabilitating mined lands; and evaluating and processing mineral patent applications and appraisals. Minerals on public land are categorized by law as:

Locatable - those that may be "staked" and claimed under the General Mining Law of 1872. These are mainly metals such as gold, silver, lead, copper, zinc, and uranium, but also include some non-metallic minerals such as mica and asbestos.

<u>Salable</u> - those that may be sold under the Material Sale Act of 1947. Included are common varieties of sand, gravel, and stone.

<u>Leasable</u> - those that may be leased under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, such as oil and gas, coal, oil shale, phosphate, sodium, potassium, and geothermal steam.

At present, the planning units are not areas of intensive mineral production. Exploration activity is increasing for certain materials and will continue to increase as economic and technological climates improve.

Minerals Resource Decision and Rationale (partial listing)

Belt_Mountains/Fergus

1. Oil and Gas

a. Assure continued licensing, leasing, exploration, and development of federally owned energy minerals on both public land and privately owned land having energy minerals reserved to the United States.

Excepted lands: Identified sharptail/sage grouse leks and nesting areas from February 1 to July 1, prairie dog towns, endangered species habitat, creek bottoms and areas within 100 feet of flood plains, proposed campground sites, VRM Class I,

II, and III areas, frail lands, high erosion areas, and slopes greater than 15%. Special stipulations may be used, on a case-by-case basis, to allow exploration on the excepted lands.

The current energy crisis and anticipated future demands prescribe intense exploration for energy mineral reserves. Most of the planning unit is relatively unexplored due to the distances from transportation facilities and population centers. Management will provide adequate surface protection provisions.

b. Continue to revise and refine the boundaries of the "Sensitive Category" system of oil and gas leasing.

Revision of the sensitivity boundaries will insure proper evaluation of oil and gas leases to provide adequate mitigation, while not unduly limiting oil and gas exploration and/or development.

2. Sand and Gravel

a. Dispose of sand and gravel through free use permits to satisfy local demands.

These materials are normally used for road and building construction for the public benefit. Where feasible, these deposits on public land should be available for free use or sale.

3. Other Minerals

a. Assure the availability of public lands and minerals in and along the flanks of the Little Belt, Judiths, Moccasins, and Big Snowy Mountains for exploration and development of locatable minerals (gold, silver, lead, etc.).

In order to determine the location of a mineral deposit and its potential for commercial extraction, vast acreages are required for exploration using current technology. Exploration of large areas is required because nature has only allowed the emplacement of commercial mineralization in relatively small, selected locations.

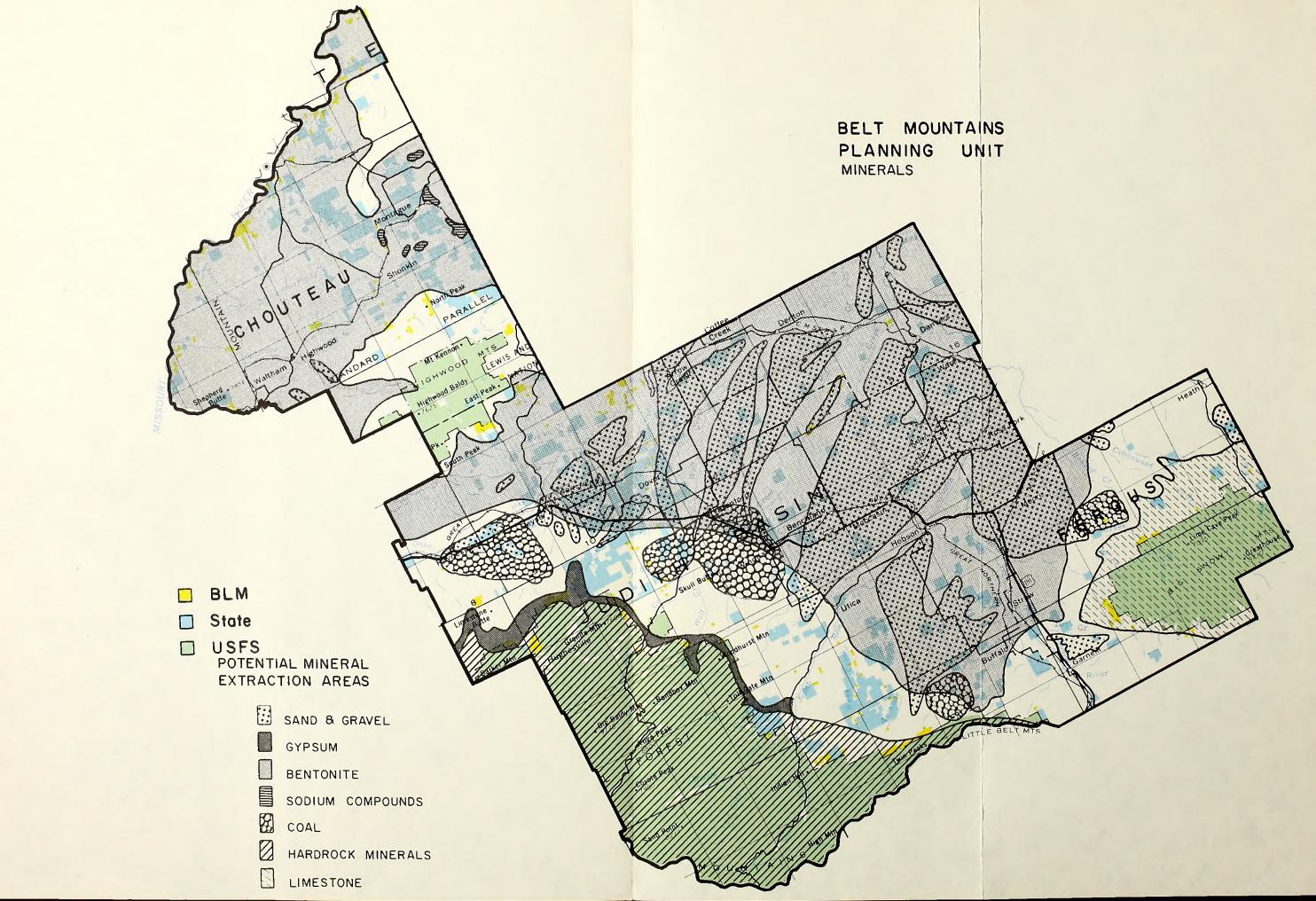
Fergus

a. Dispose of the Bear Gulch limestone on Blacktail Creek via material sales contracts stipulated to provide paleontologic review of any fossils recovered during quarrying.

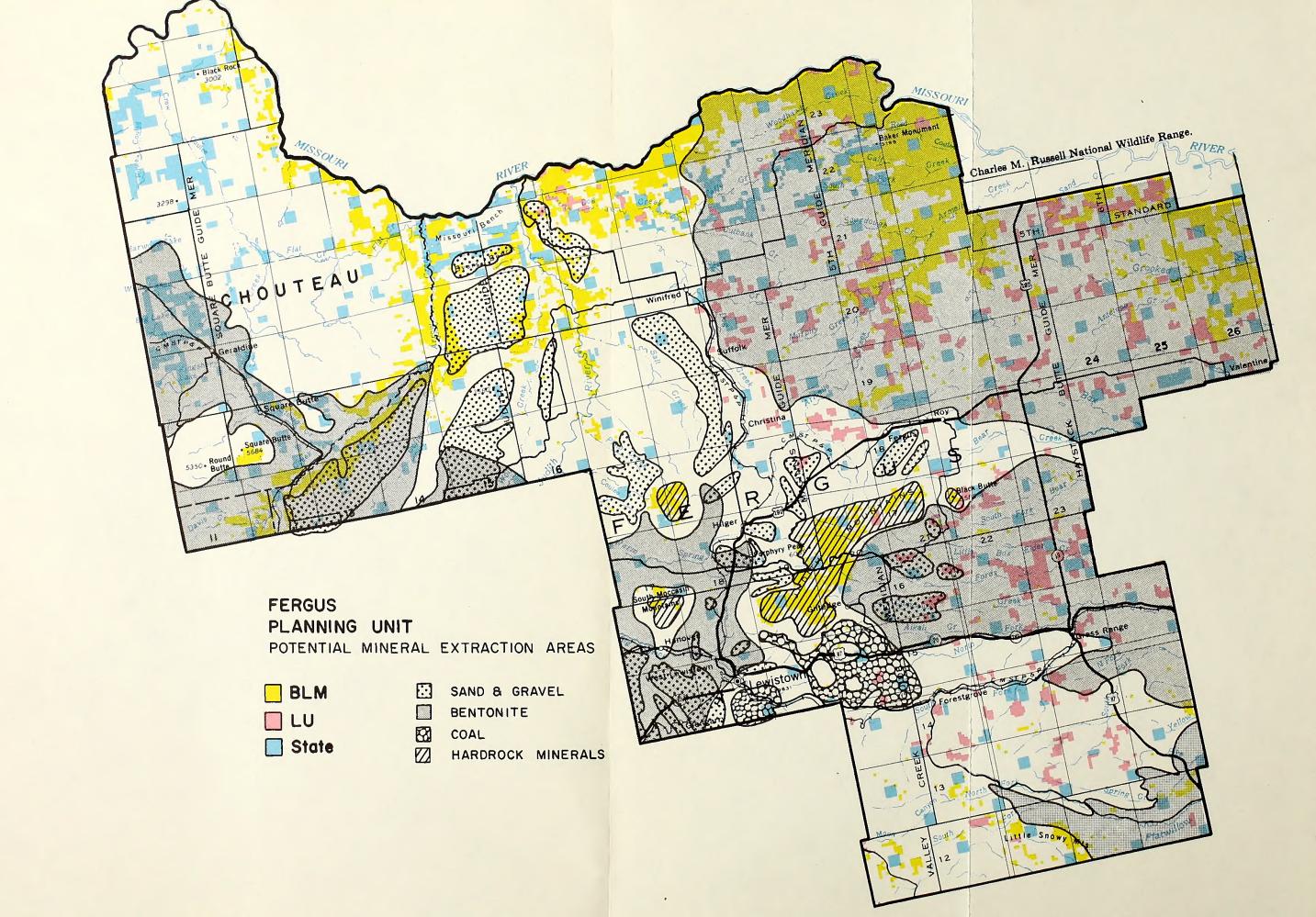
Bear Gulch limestone has been determined a salable commodity. Quarrying the subject material will be on a small scale, only during fair weather months. Due to size of the quarries, light demand, and period of use, no major conflicts are anticipated.



This area surrounding the northeast base of the Highwood Mountains in Chouteau County was once the site of an operating quarry. During the 1930s, the quarry supported a small town which included 15-20 buildings. After 15 years of operation, the quarry closed leaving no evidence today of its existence.









Background

Timber in both planning units is found on small scattered tracts of public land adjoining or near the Lewis and Clark National Forest. More productive forest land is found in the Little Snowies, Judiths, North Moccasin, Little Belt, Big Snowy, and Highwood Mountains. These stands contain ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, Douglas fir, and Engelmann spruce. Timber lands are classified into two categories: protection areas and intensive management areas. Acreages included in these categories are as follows:

Type - Category	Belt Mountains	Fergus
Protection Areas (acres)	3,020	74,460
Intensive Management (acres)	2,380	16,540

Those acreages identified as suitable for intensive management will be managed on a sustained yield basis. Protective acreages are forested lands that cannot be managed on a sustained yield basis due to steep topography, shallow soils, marginal sites, etc. However, this does not preclude the harvesting of forest products from the area. Posts, poles, Christmas trees, firewood, and over-mature saw timber may be harvested on a demand basis so long as adverse impacts do not occur.

In addition to timber production, all forested public lands are valuable for wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and aesthetics. Deer, elk, small game, and birds use these areas extensively.

Forest Resource Decision and Rationale (partial listing)

Belt_Mountains/Fergus

1. <u>Identification</u>

a. Identify and mark BLM boundaries.

Identification of BLM boundaries will help to reduce cases of inadvertent trespass. It will also aid new employees, other agency people, and the general public.

2. Management

a. Provide for sale and harvest of forest products, at fair market value, with due consideration for all other resource values.

The main management tool for timber stands is application of cutting methods which will promote growth and protect site activity. BLM intensive management areas are a small part of the total commercial forest land in the unit.

b. Issue free-use permits to individuals to meet personal demand for fuel wood.

Demand for personal fuel wood for fireplaces and home heating is increasing. The most efficient way to meet demand is by free-use permit.

c. Cooperate with the State Division of Forestry and with USFS in order to monitor potential trespass cases and other forestry problems.

As lumber interests expand in and near the area, an increase in acres logged will also occur. Because BLM lands are intermingled and largely not identified, trespass will occur more frequently. Other hazards including insect epidemics, disease, etc., can also be monitored and cooperative action planned if a close liaison is maintained with other agencies involved in forest management.

Environmental Overview

The main management tool for mature timber stands is application of cutting methods which will promote growth and protect site productivity. The sparsely timbered areas that lack saw timber stands are more important for wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and aesthetic values than wood fiber production. Local harvesting of minor forest products will be permitted if resource conflicts are negligible.

RANGE MANAGEMENT

Background

The range program includes inventory, evaluation, and management of the vegetative resource on public lands used by domestic livestock, wild horses, burros, and other grazing animals. The program involves authorizing and supervising grazing use, developing and maintaining supporting livestock management facilities such as fences and reservoirs, and protecting public rangelands from noxious weed infestations, pests, and diseases.

BLM is developing livestock grazing management plans for the majority of public lands and is planning to complete environmental statements on all lands where domestic livestock grazing is authorized.

Livestock grazing operations are presently an important economic activity within the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units. Currently administered under the Taylor Grazing Act are 61,396 animal unit months (AUMs) of livestock forage in the Fergus Planning Unit. These AUMs are being used to support approximately 18,000 head of livestock. In the Belt Mountains Planning Unit, 6,265 AUMs of public land forage are being used to support over 1,000 head of livestock.

BLM range program's goal is to improve or maintain existing range conditions and available forage for livestock on public land. Grazing management systems proposed as a means of reaching this goal will be finalized under Bureau policy and guidelines to insure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and protection of other resources. Grazing systems are formulated to accomplish specific objectives listed in each allotment management plan (AMP). One objective listed in every AMP is to increase the available livestock forage. Grazing systems in these planning units vary from pasture rotation to rest rotation systems on various AMPs. These systems are designed to rest the desirable forage species during growing season so they can store food and/or produce seed. This in turn increases forage production and raises range conditions.

Range Resource Decision and Rationale (partial listing)

Belt Mountains

1. Implementation of Allotment Management Plans

a. Implement allotment management plans on two allotments (see map, page 19).

Inventories of these allotments have shown adequate public land and resources available for intensive livestock management.

2. Livestock Grazing on Non-AMP Allotments

a. Issue non-AMP livestock permits or leases on the remaining 65 tracts of public lands.

These allotments contain small amounts of public land relative to private ownership. The ability and practicality of regulating livestock use in these areas is marginal.

b. Examine each non-AMP lease area/allotment at least once every five years to determine range condition and trends and identify any adverse livestock impacts or resource conflicts.

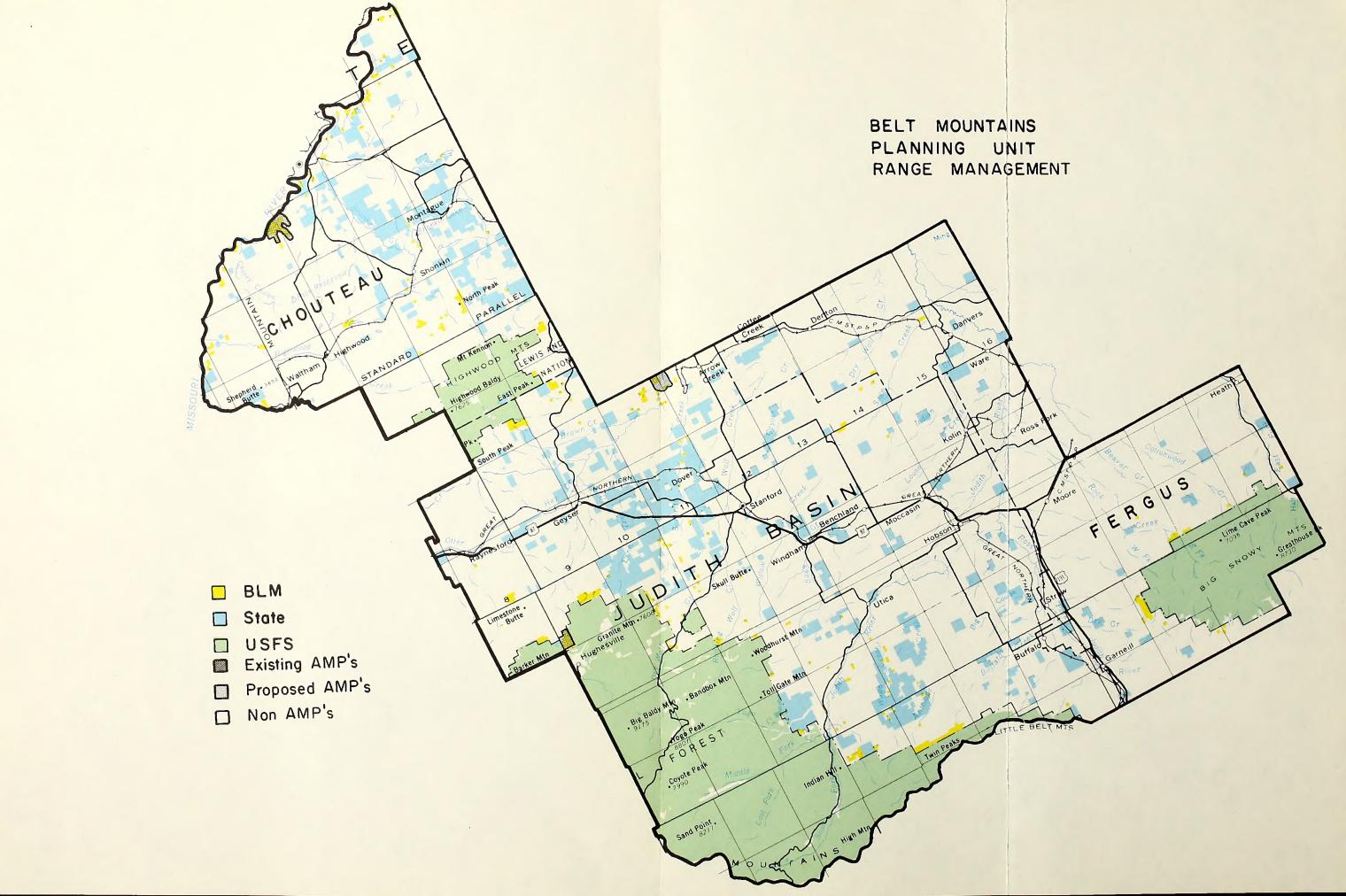
Each lease area/allotment must be periodically examined so that adjustments in grazing use can be made if a downward trend or conflict with other resources develops.

Fergus

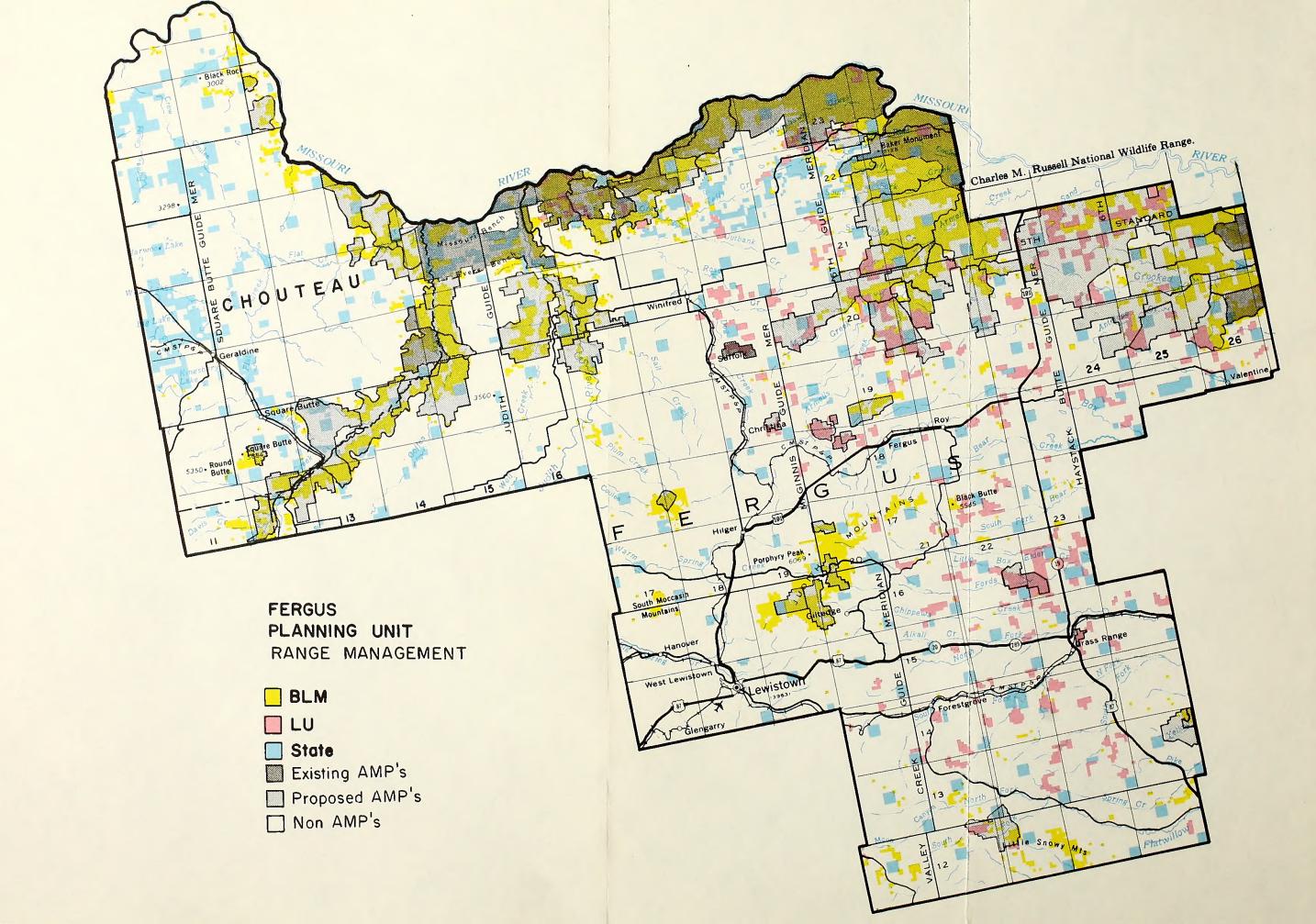
1. Existing Allotment Management Plans

a. Continue grazing authorizations in accordance with terms and conditions of 10 existing allotment management plans.

Allotment evaluations and studies indicate that multiple use objectives outlined in the AMPs are being met. Range users are satisifed with the results from a forage and livestock production standpoint.









2. Implementation of Allotment Management Plans

a. Implement allotment management plans (AMPs) on 61 allotments.

These are areas where intensive livestock management is feasible. The AMPs will prescribe the manner in which livestock operations will be conducted to meet multiple use needs and objectives.

3. Livestock Grazing on Non-AMP Allotments

a. Issue non-AMP livestock permits or leases on the remaining 399 tracts of land.

These allotments generally contain small amounts of public land relative to private ownership. The ability and practicality of regulating livestock use in these areas is quite marginal. AMPs are not necessary on these tracts. Licensing and permit procedures combined with field inspections will be necessary to protect public land.

4. Fire Suppression Plan

a. Develop a modified fire suppression plan for the Missouri breaks area which takes into account both the positive and negative effects of fire and fire control activities.

The timbered Missouri breaks is an area in which fire has played an important function in improved livestock forage and wildlife habitat. Because fire can serve a beneficial role in this situation, a modified fire suppression plan should be developed which takes into account the benefits as well as deleterious effects.

Environmental Overview

The allotment management plans proposed for implementation were developed within other resource objectives and restrictions, particularly wildlife habitat directives. In addition, the Missouri Breaks Grazing Management Environmental Statement is being prepared to assess their impact. The non-AMP tracts are in allotments that contain small amounts of public land relative to private landholdings. The

ability and practicality of regulating livestock use in these areas is marginal. Licensing and permit procedures, combined with a system of regular inspection and resource condition inventory, will be necessary to protect public values.

The development of a modified fire suppression plan is based on the premise that wildland fire in the Missouri River breaks area generally does more good than harm, particularly with respect to livestock forage and wildlife habitat. Many times, the values threatened do not justify control expenses.



BLM allotments help support livestock grazing operations in the planning units. Many AMPs require support improvements including water developments such as reservoirs and fence construction and maintenance.

WATERSHED

Background

BLM is responsible for managing public land watersheds to stabilize soils, produce water, and enhance water quality. Watershed specialists deal with problems of erosion, water quality, and water yield of both surface and subsurface sources. Closely coordinated management of all resources and activity operations is stressed to maintain or improve watershed condition.

The majority of soils in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units are derived from sedimentary parent material (marine shales). These soils are susceptible to erosion when disturbed or exposed to prolonged wetting. Precipitation in these planning units averages 14-15 inches per year.

Approximately 318,808 acres of public land have been inventoried for watershed condition in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units. Based on the watershed inventory, erosion conditions on these acreages are:

WATERSHED CONDITIONS

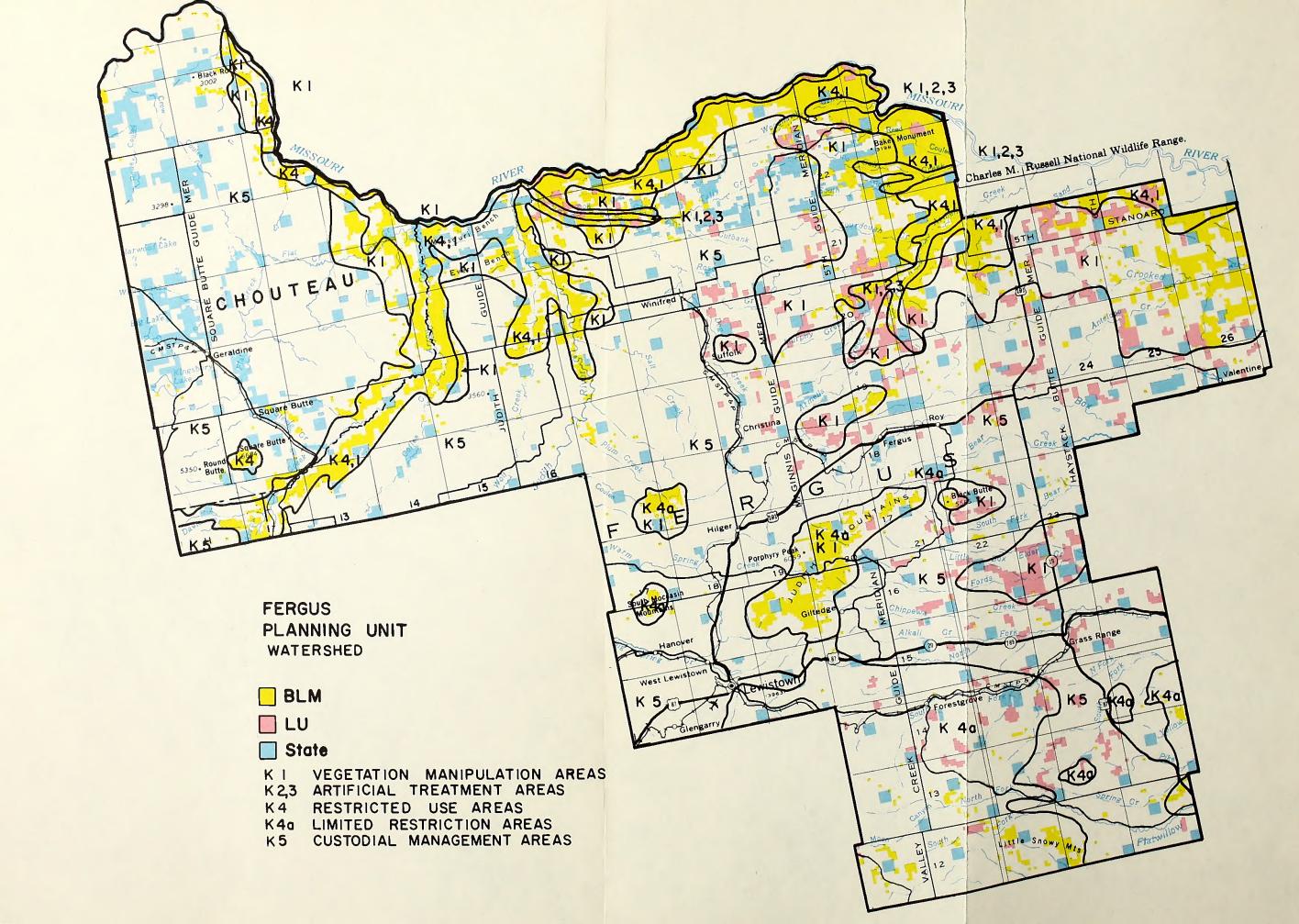
Belt	Stable	Slight	Moderate	Critical	Total Acres
Mountains	740	1,360	0	370	2,470
Fergus	960	122,489	138,169	54,720	316,338
				TOTAL	318,808

Both geologic (natural) and accelerated (man caused) erosion are present in the area. Geologic is dominant because of the erosive land formations in the area. Because of the wide range and amounts of geologic erosion, it is difficult to measure or estimate the effect of accelerated erosion on and off the watershed. The small amount of accelerated erosion that is occurring is due mainly to selective overgrazing and to surface disturbance activities such as roads and ORV use. Any activity that increases bare ground above 30 percent will significantly increase runoff and therefore erosion proportionately. This is especially true on the steeper slopes in the area.

Methods are used to deal with both natural and man caused erosion if cost benefits and environmental impacts are favorable. These methods include intensive livestock management, protective measures for soil and plant destruction and mechanical land treatments (contour furrowing, check dams, and seeding). These methods control water erosion and improve plant cover.



Shonkin Sag, located in Chouteau County, illustrates the works of glaciers and streams during the Pleistocene age. Its outstanding feature is a high level spillway channel 300 feet deep, that drained the glacial Lake Great Falls at high drainage stage. This locality was recommended to National Landmark Status as one of the largest, best known, and most illustrative glacial drainage channel of its type. (Square Butte can be seen in the background.)





Watershed Resource Decision and Rationale (partial listing)

Belt Mountains/Fergus

1. Management

a. Implement grazing systems on those allotments identified as suitable.

Soils in the planning units are easily eroded when exposed to weathering elements. Plant cover on these soils is necessary to maintain soil bonding and litter to provide protection. Grazing systems can be designed to increase vigor and litter production.

b. Infrequently used roads should be considered for closure and rehabilitation if they fulfill no multiple resource need and create watershed problems.

Runoff and erosion from roads is especially damaging on finer textured soils with slopes of 30% or more. Closure of these roads would benefit the watershed program by reducing the number of vehicles in fragile areas.

c. In the critical erosion classification areas of the unit, all vegetative increases in forage will be allocated to watershed rather than livestock or wildlife until the soil is stabilized, then no more than 20% of the vegetative increase will be allocated to livestock grazing.

By increasing ground cover and plant density, the watershed will become more stabilized and erosion and sediment rates will decrease.

d. Control wildfire and monitor control burns to prevent watershed deterioration. Mechanical treatments should be evaluated fully before being considered. Fire rehabilitation utilizing approved rehabilitation techniques (with native species or other tested introduced species) should be undertaken on the hotter burns if a watershed problem is evident.

Fire occurrence is a natural phenomenon in the area and has contributed to watershed, wildlife, and livestock forage values. However, hotter burns may not revegetate naturally within an acceptable amount of time. Reseeding should provide some permanent cover for watershed within a year.

Environmental Overview

Improving soil and vegetation cover and water quality contributes to overall environmental enhancement. Proposed watershed modification or treatment decisions have moderating stipulations or rehabilitation standards included.



Drainage areas in the planning units are characterized by broad plateaus, dissected by entrenched streams into clay hills and ridges separated by wide, flat, basin-like valleys along with many high ridges and deep valleys.

WILDLIFE

Background

The diversity of vegetative types associated with mountainous areas, flat rolling benches separated by coulees, and the steep slopes and flat creek bottoms of the Missouri River "breaks" provide a well-balanced variety of wildlife habitat in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units. Principal big game species include mule deer, white-tailed deer, antelope, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, black bear, and moose. Upland game bird species are sage grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, pheasant, gray partridge, Merriam turkeys, and mountain grouse. Waterfowl consist of ducks and geese who reproduce on the planning units' waters. Both planning units have potential habitat for the black-footed ferret, a rare and endangered specie.

Recreation use and hunting can be expressed in terms of days of use. (A visitor day is defined as the participation of one person in a specific activity during any part of a 12-hour period.) The importance of a certain specie to the local and state economy can be indicated by hunter days of use.

In the Belt Mountains Planning Unit, deer and elk (in terms of hunter days) are the most often hunted species in the area.

HUNTER DAYS ON BLM LANDS BELT_MOUNTAINS

Specie	Hunter Days
Deer	368
Elk	266
Antelope	15
Sharp-tailed grouse	18
Hungarian partridge	19
Blue grouse	4

In terms of hunter days in the Fergus Planning Unit, time spent in the pursuit of deer is most significant. Sharptailed and sage grouse were the most heavily hunted game bird species in the planning unit.

HUNTER DAYS ON BLM LANDS FERGUS

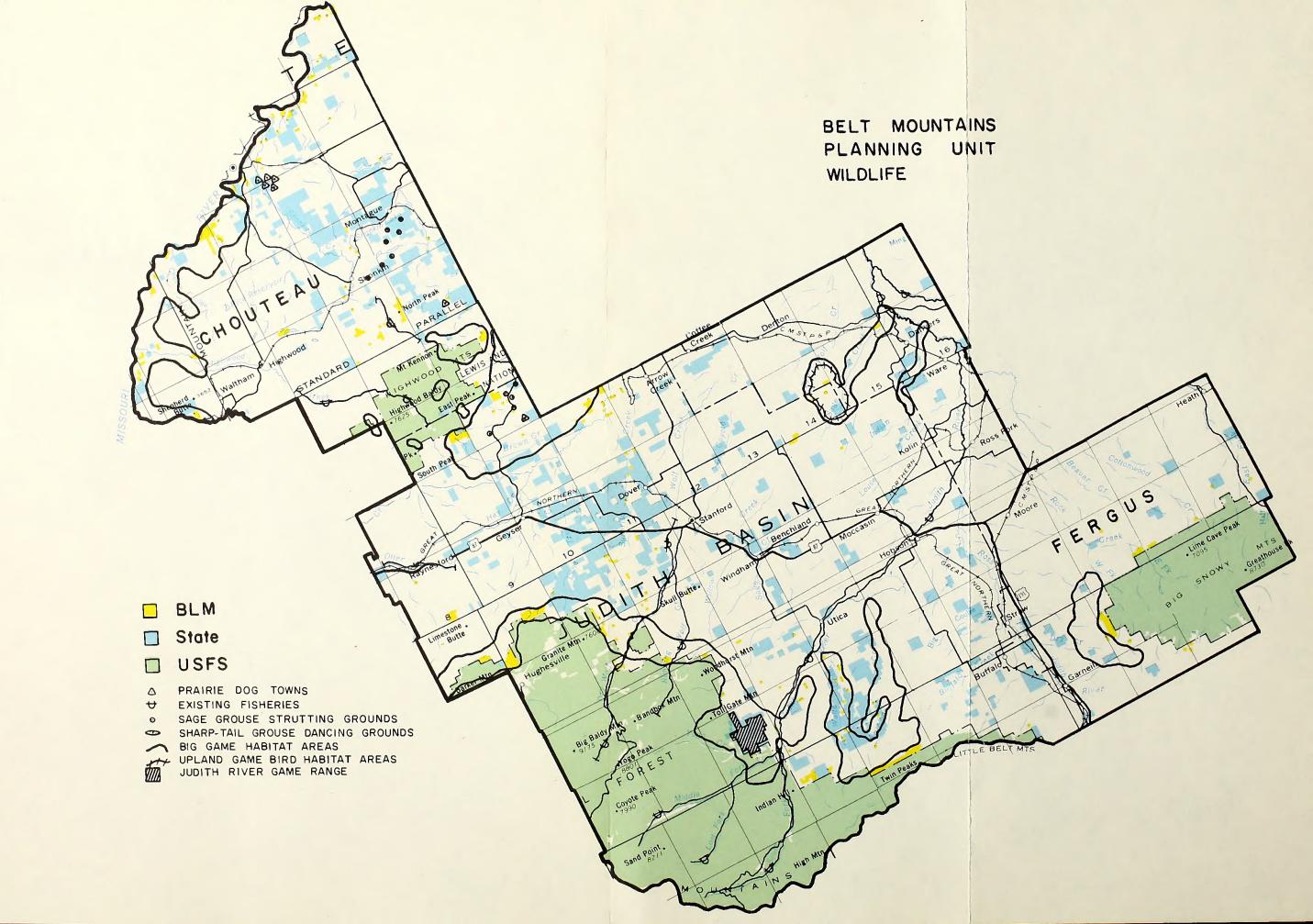
Specie	Hunter Days
Deer	9,433
Elk	33
Antelope	584
Sharp-tailed grouse	606
Sage grouse	348
Hungarian partridge	395

Due to the demonstrated importance of wildlife to the local economy and to Montana as a whole, the protection and development of crucial wildlife habitat was considered a prime objective in overall planning. The following guidelines and those of other resource programs are designed to provide protection of crucial wildlife habitat.

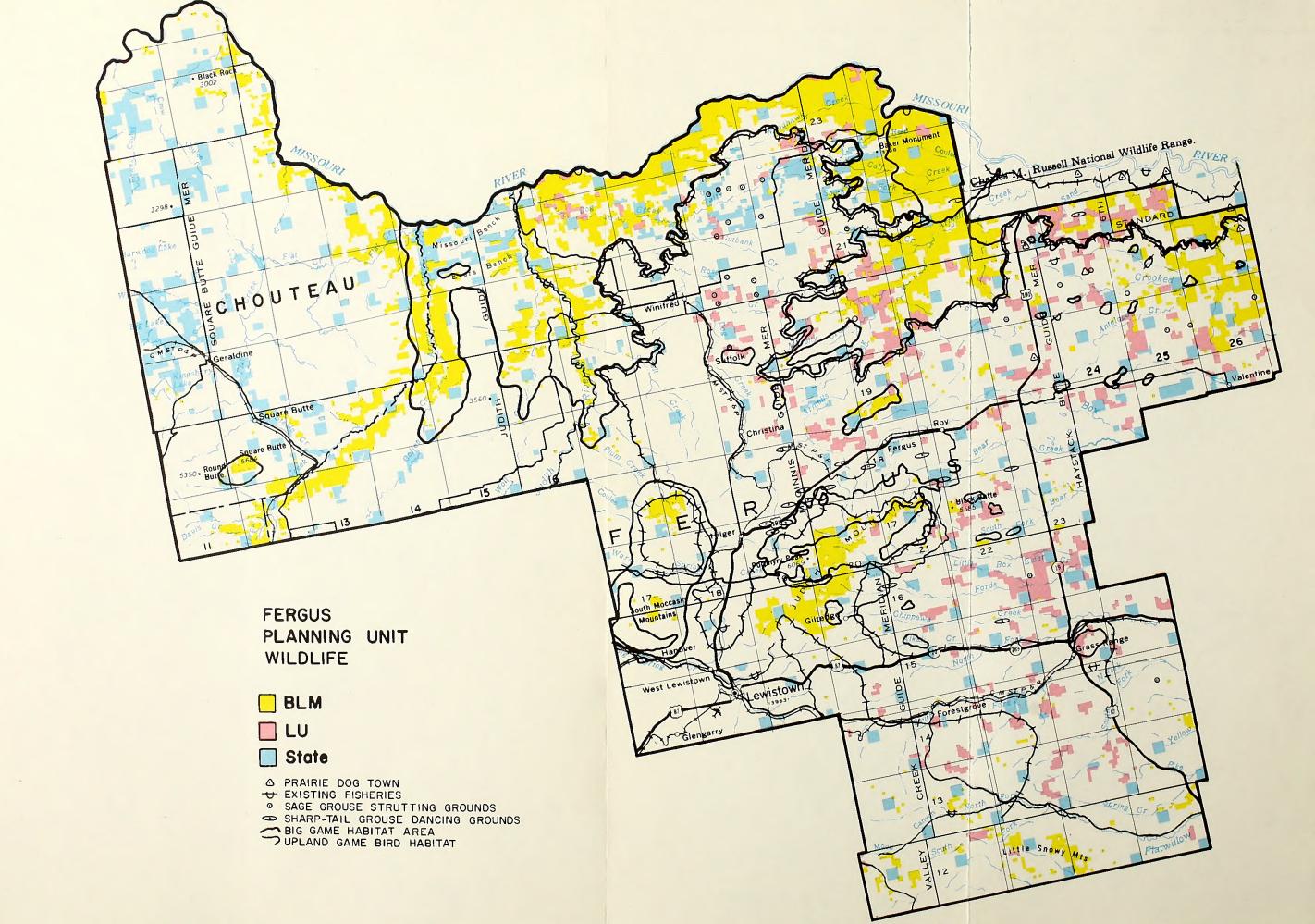
The major objectives of the wildlife habitat activity will be to provide enhancement and protection of crucial habitat and to provide input towards the acquisition of private lands which contain crucial wildlife and waterfowl habitat.



Every spring sage grouse (and sharp-tailed grouse) return to their leks to dance their courtship ritual. Sage grouse (shown here) and sharp-tailed grouse return to these areas year after year. Protection of leks helps insure breeding and nesting success.









Wildlife Resource Decision and Rationale (partial listing)

Belt Mountains/Fergus

1. Habitat Improvement

a. Improve the vigor of brush species, especially in coulee bottoms, by removing livestock use as soon as possible in the fall on deer, antelope, and sage grouse ranges.

Browse plants are used by most wildlife species for food, cover, or both. Livestock has a large impact on browse plants. Limitations on livestock grazing reduce consumption of browse species by livestock.

b. New fences on public land will be located and designed to allow movement of antelope. Existing fences will be modified to allow antelope movement.

Antelope are found throughout the planning unit. Does "fawn" in the rougher portions of the breaks in the spring, consequently fences providing movement of antelope are necessary.



Antelope fawn on BLM land. The primary antelope habitat is open sagebrush-grasslands in the planning units. BLM management decisions protect critical wildlife habitat areas.

c. Develop a modified fire suppression plan for the Missouri River "breaks" area which takes into account the beneficial and adverse effects of fire and fire control activities.

The timbered Missouri breaks is an area in which fire has played an important function in improved livestock forage and wildlife habitat. Because fire can serve a beneficial role in this situation, a modified fire suppression plan should be developed which takes into account the benefits as well as damaging effects.

2. Habitat Maintenance

a. Allow for control of sagebrush after 10 years of AMP implementation has failed to show an improvement in ecological range condition and then only after a loss of sagebrush has shown not to be detrimental to existing populations of wildlife species.

Intensive research has demonstrated the total dependence of sage grouse on sage as a food and cover source. Antelope and deer also depend on sage as a food source during winter months.

b. Limit artificial land treatment practices on public lands.

Artificial land treatments provide a radical change to habitat over a short period of time. Habitat and/or behavioral adjustments by wildlife to change can only take place over a long period of time, if at all.

c. When it is agreed that old crested wheat seeding on LU (Bankhead Jones Resource Lands) lands are of low value to livestock management, rehabilitate to native range.

Expansive acreages of crested wheat crops have little or no value for wildlife. The rehabilitation of old crested wheat seedings on LU lands to native range will improve food conditions for wildlife.

3. Habitat Expansion

a. Enhance raptor habitat by creating perches in treeless terrain on public lands.

Raptors are recognized as an important non-game wildlife resource on public lands. Development of suitable ledges should increase raptor nesting success where their absence is a limiting factor.

b. Acquire control of private lands containing crucial habitat areas when located in or near large blocks of public lands. This may be done by exchange, agreement, or purchase.

Many crucial habitat areas are on private lands. With the increased emphasis on range improvement and intensified agriculture, these areas are in jeopardy. Loss of crucial habitat often results in loss of wildlife populations. Crucial habitat areas should be in public ownership and control to insure protection, maintenance and improvement.

c. When practical, construct at least one goose island concurrently with the construction of new reservoirs, except for fisheries reservoirs.

Public lands in the Northern Great Plains are important for increasing production of waterfowl by providing additional habitat and improving and protecting existing habitat.

4. Endangered Species

a. Manage black-tailed prairie dog towns for public use and benefit.

Prairie dogs are a natural occurrence within the prairie ecosystem. Prairie dogs provide a variety of wildlife based recreation and key habitat for the black-footed ferret.

5. Animal Damage Control

a. Recognize and manage predators for the public benefit. Control predator damage to livestock or game animals.

Wildlife species commonly known as predators are necessary in the wildlife community to help maintain proper balance and variety. These animals help meet local and regional demands for wildlife based recreation. A planned approach to administration of animal damage control measures on public land will consider the welfare of the ecosystem and efforts can be directed to specific problems.

6. Herbicides

a. Discourage the spraying of noxious weeds on public lands in those areas where they have significant values for wildlife.

Many "weed" species are important food items in the diets of big game and non-game wildlife. In addition, they provide cover for ground nesting birds, small mammals, and reptiles. Eliminating weeds in areas where they are important to wildlife will greatly reduce the habitat available by localized wildlife populations.

Environmental Overview

Management decisions and proposed actions are aimed at benefiting wildlife habitat and associated wildlife species. Decisions are directed at protecting and improving specific habitat areas, particularly critical locations such as antelope winter range and sage grouse strutting grounds. Creation of new habitat is proposed for aquatic species. Restrictions placed on other activities could cause changes in the existing way of life and mode of operations. An example would be existing fence modification to allow more antelope movement. Generally, the benefits should outweigh the adverse impacts.

RECREATION

Background

The recreation program consists of five elements: (1) recreation, (2) natural history, (3) wilderness values, (4) visual resources, and (5) cultural resources. BLM is involved with the inventory, identification, and reservation of these values; the maintenance of any associated facilities; visitor management; and the control of recreation activities, for example, by a fee and permit system.

The major recreational pursuits in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units are hunting, boating, fishing, and driving for pleasure in descending order. A limited amount of caving (spelunking) is done in the Judith and Snowy Mountains. A statewide survey shows that driving and walking for pleasure, sightseeing, and fishing are the major recreational uses. Though hunting is ranked eighth on a statewide basis, it is near the top in these planning units.

Boating use is associated with the Upper Missouri Wild and Scenic River, a 149 mile stretch between Fort Benton and the Fred Robinson Bridge on Highway 191. The lower Judith River receives some boating activity but is relatively unknown to the public at this time. Fishing is limited by the number of good fisheries on public lands. Also, a lack of good public access routes, particularly all-weather roads, resulted in lower percentage of use when compared with the statewide survey. The scenic overlook associated with the radar base site in the Judith Mountains provides a substantial amount of the sightseeing use.

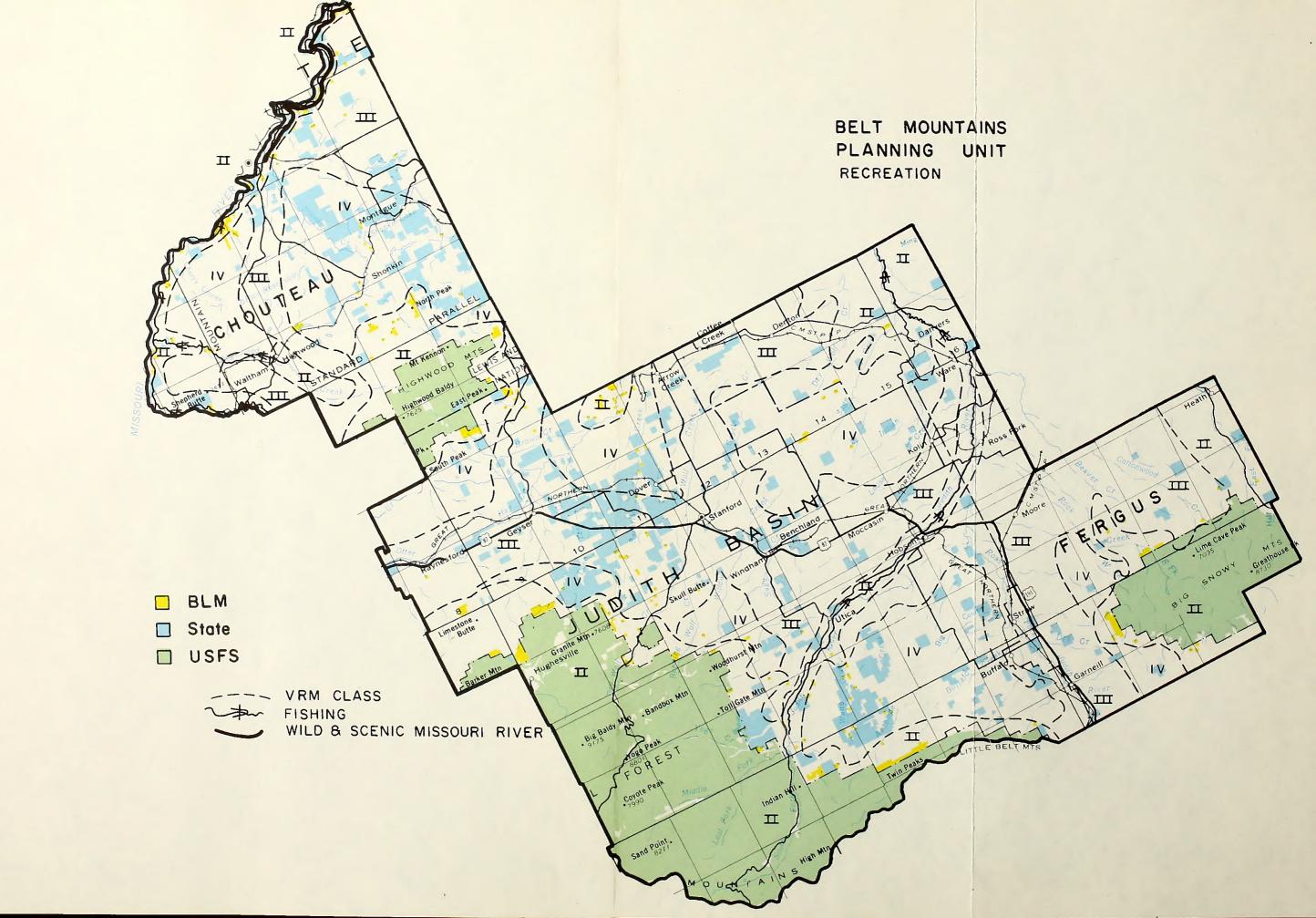
RECREATION VISITOR DAYS

Belt Mountains	
Activity	Visitor Days
Floating	$-\frac{1}{2},\overline{400}$
Sightseeing	100
Fergus	
Activity	Visitor Days
Camping	$\frac{1}{1},\frac{9}{9}00$
Picnicking	1,300
Water Sports	9,000
Sightseeing	2,500

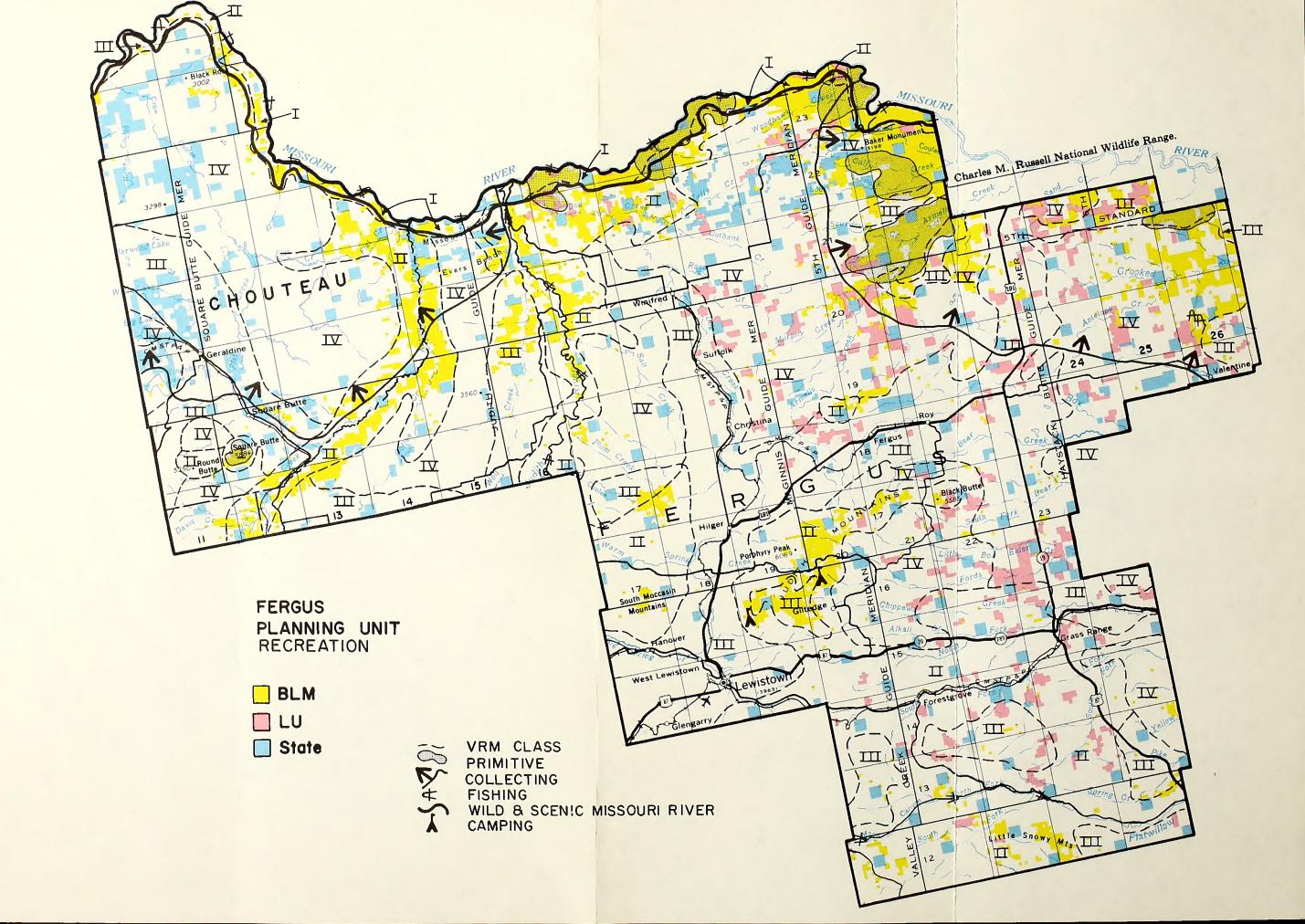
Seven areas have been identified as potential wilderness or primitive areas. The formally designated Square Butte Natural Area is one of these sites.



Hunting is a major recreation activity in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units. Coulees, such as this one on public land, provide good upland game bird habitat.









Visual values were identified in a Visual Resource Management Inventory conducted in 1977. VRM management classes include Class I which is most restrictive in terms of what actions can be permitted (Square Butte Natural Area); Class II where management activity should not change basic elements of the scenery; Class III where the landscape's basic elements may be altered but they must remain subordinate to existing visual scene; and Class IV where management initiated changes are predominate but they must reflect what might be a naturally occurring process.

Scenic quality ranges from Class A scenery which applies primarily to forested mountains (Wild and Scenic river areas); Class B applies to predominately open foothills and primary water courses; Class C scenery includes dryland farming areas and the grass/sagebrush plain.

Recreation Resource Decision and Rationale (partial listing)

Belt Mountains/Fergus

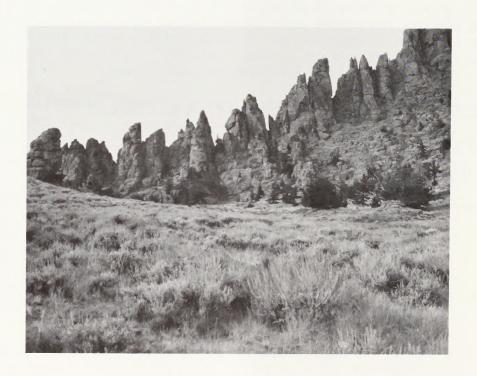
1. Visual Resource Management (VRM)

a. Construction projects and structures will be located and built to blend in with visual class parameters. Land treatment practices would be laid out to conform with natural contours and type lines. Land surfaces disturbed by severe fires, construction work, or mineral activity will be reseeded with appropriate vegetative species to preserve the natural landscape.

The visual resource is recognized as an important element of the human environment. NEPA, FLPMA, and existing Bureau policy dictate that all public lands shall be managed to protect, maintain, enhance, and rehabilitate the visual resource. With proper planning and development, landscape changing activities can be accomplished and still enhance the visual scene.

2. Visitor Use Management

a. Allow recreational collection of flowers, berries, nuts, seeds, cones, leaves, and similar renewable resources plus the collection of such non-renewable resources as rocks, mineral specimens, and common invertebrate fossils in reasonable quantities.



A "hoodoo" ridge of shonkinite on the southside of Square Butte, Chouteau County. Square Butte is considered one of the most significant and scenic geological features in eastern Montana. This flat topped butte rises abruptly 1,700 feet above the surrounding plain. The top drops off in a 200 foot precipice and the base is surrounded by a labyrinth of pillard rocks (small monoliths) called "hoodoos." In-between are steep slopes, talus, and dikes. Color differences in the rocks are striking.

Square Butte has been formally designated as an Outstanding Natural Area. Outstanding natural areas are established to preserve scenic values and areas of natural wonder. The preservation of these resources in their natural condition is the primary management objective.

Hunting for and collecting these items is a popular recreational activity in the area. Collecting these items for personal use, consumption, or hobby interests will not damage the natural environment. Collection for commercial purposes is limited in accordance with federal regulation.

b. Manage prairie dog towns for recreational purposes such as zoological, sightseeing, and sport hunting.

Prairie dogs are a natural occurrence within the prairie ecosystem. Prairie dogs provide a variety of wildlife based recreation and key wildlife habitat.

- c. Install land status signs (entering or leaving public lands) along access routes. Mark public land boundaries and provide area maps. Directional and information signs should be placed on roads and at landmarks.
- d. Road easements should be obtained to all water sites and hunting areas rated with high recreational values.

Recreationists do not have adequate knowledge of where public lands are located and available access to these lands. Accurate mapping, informational and directional signs, and legal access will ensure maximum recreational benefit on public lands.

3. Fisheries

a. Where practicable, water impoundments will provide for fisheries.

The use trend on water-based recreational activity is increasing. These sites provide good fishing and other water-based recreational activities.

Environmental Overview

Minimal impacts are expected as a result of recreation management decisions. In general, these decisions favor environmental protection and continuance of present lifestyles. Planned control in the authorization of surface disturbing activities and location of intrusions will preserve historic values and maintain a quality visual resource. Some restraints for protection of recreational values will no doubt cause conflicts with other uses. An example of this would be possible restrictions placed on off-road vehicle use.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Background

The cultural resources program assumes that the primary value of prehistoric and historic sites is their potential for yielding information regarding past cultural systems. Various federal regulations, including the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and Executive Order 11593, provide directives for BLM's cultural resources program. The general objectives of the program are identification, preservation, and utilization of significant sites and information.

Little information exists concerning the planning unit's prehistory. Artifacts dated as belonging to the Early Prehistoric Period (10,000 B.C. to 5,500 B.C.) have been found in similar areas of the Northern Great Plains. Potential for discovery of prehistoric sites within the planning unit is good. Recommendations for inventory and research of cultural sites have been approved as decisions and are summarized on the following pages.

A full range of western history is represented by the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units. The key reason for this is the importance of the Missouri River to the area. It served as a major transportation route from the time of Lewis and Clark through the steamboat era and beyond. Forts along the Missouri River were important in the fur trade and the Indian wars. The Mining era also effected the history of the area. Early cattle and sheep industries were located in the planning units. Homesteads, especially the ones on the LU lands, represent the futile efforts of modern man to settle and farm the area. These planning units occupy the center of the state and have consequently played a continuing role in the history of Montana.

Class II inventories were conducted in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units in 1977. A Class II inventory is a sample inventory of randomly selected tracts. Over six percent (6.7 and 6.6 percent, respectively) of the acreage of public lands was inventoried.

The Class III inventory work has been restricted to small environmental assessments. Most of these have been for range improvements or land exchanges. A Class III inventory is an intensive survey of a specific area designed to locate most or all of the sites in that area.

Resource Decisions and Rationale

1. Inventory and Research

a. Continue cultural sites inventory on public lands.

The inventory will provide the Bureau with baseline data in the form of identifications and preliminary evaluations of the planning unit's cultural resources. The inventory will also enable the Bureau to meet the needs of various scientific and/or educational groups by supplying research data related to the concerns of history, anthropology, archaeology, geography, paleontology, and geology.

b. Investigate certain identified cultural resource sites by archaeological excavation and analysis. Prepare interpretative projects for public enjoyment and collect information from local people having knowledge of the area's cultural resources.

Investigations lead to interpretative synthesis which are of value to the scientific community and the general public. They are also educational to artifact and relic collectors by illustrating why undisturbed cultural sites are important and necessary to understanding an area's early history and prehistory. The public can also become involved in and contribute to these investigations.

2. Protection

a. Monitor, protect, and/or mitigate archaeological, historical, and paleontological sites which are subject to erosion, vandalism, and surface disturbing projects. Commence and continue surveillance, construct physical barriers, or undertake salvage excavations as protection and/or mitigation measures.

The sensitivity of cultural resources to damage and disturbance requires that they be monitored. Surveillance will decrease the vandalism and provide data for trend analysis. Physical barriers may reduce or halt a disturbing agent such as livestock trampling or vehicle traffic. Salvage excavations will allow a cultural resource to be scientifically studied before it is totally destroyed.

b. Cultural resources which appear qualified will be nominated to the National Register. Activity plans will be prepared for National Register sites.

The Bureau is required by national policy and law to nominate qualified sites for the National Register. Activity plans ensure that National Register sites are maintained and available for public enjoyment.

Environmental Overview

Negligible impacts are expected as a result of the cultural resources management decisions. In general, these decisions favor protection and further study of cultural resources.



Fort Maginnis, Montana, located in Fergus County (T. 17 N., R. 20 E.) during peak activity around 1880-1890. The post was vital to fur trade, Indian Wars, and homesteading of the area.

Interrelationships With Other Plans

The C.M. Russell National Wildlife Range (CMRNWR), managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), borders a portion of the Fergus Planning Unit. The management framework plan decisions, as outlined here, do not deal with the CMRNWR. However, the need for coordination of activity plans between BLM and USFWS is obvious. A new planning effort on the game range is being initiated by USFWS. As their land use plans are finalized, continued cooperation between the two agencies will insure sound management of all public lands in the area.

The Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units border on portions of the Lewis and Clark National Forest. There are no existing AMP allotments on both BLM and US Forest Service (USFS) land. However, numerous non-AMP allotments do exist. The proposed "Nebel Coulee" and "Bald Butte" AMPs border USFS lands. These allotments are, in a sense, "combined" BLM-USFS allotments due to lack of fences. The adjoining USFS allotments provide for similar livestock seasons of use and grazing systems on USFS land.

The BLM Lewistown District and the Lewis and Clark National Forest staffs coordinate management activities on an "as needed" basis. The management decisions and programs for the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units appear to be consistent with Forest Service planning and land use decisions. There are no current interagency management problems. However, there are several opportunities for expanded cooperation in the future; i.e., joint access plans, habitat management plans, coordinated oil and gas leasing, etc.

Soil Conservation District plans for the three county area may create conflicts in sagebrush and noxious weed control decisions. Generally, good cooperation has existed between SCS and local soil conservation districts when resource action plans, such as AMPs, were being developed.

No county-wide land use or zoning plans have been developed for Fergus, Chouteau, or Judith Basin Counties. Adjustment of some decisions, especially in the lands activity, may be necessary if plans are developed.

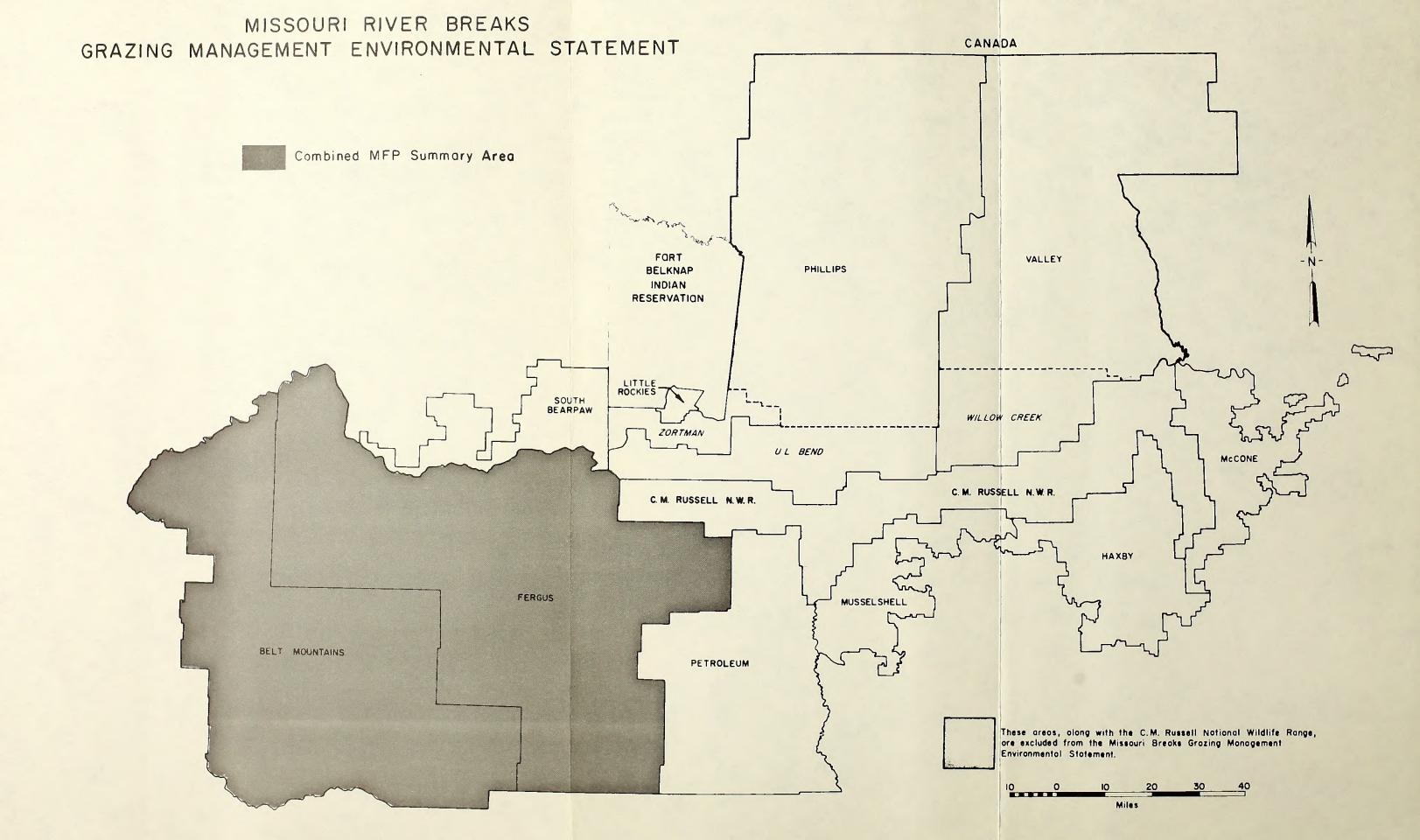
Actions After the MFP

The finalized management framework plan is the basis for onthe-ground actions in the Belt Mountains and Fergus Planning Units. These actions will be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, except for those which are non-discretionary due to other laws (i.e., wilderness review/withdrawal, and endangered species protection).

Environmental assessments will address the environmental, wilderness, and socio-economic impacts of each proposed action, providing basis for its acceptance, modification, or rejection. The implementation of allotment management plans and issuance of BLM grazing licenses/permits will be the subject of the "Missouri Breaks Grazing Environmental Statement," scheduled for completion in August 1979 by BLM Montana State Office, Branch of Environmental Coordination.

It may be some time before some of these MFP decisions are carried out, since on-the-ground actions to be initiated by BLM depend on Congressional funding. Implementation is also dependent upon completion of wilderness review as required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

Any major changes in this plan will be subject to public review and comment. It is anticipated that this plan will provide the basis for resource management to both the District and Resource Area staffs for approximately ten years. A program of resource inventory will continue to monitor any changes which may lead to modification of resource use. Significant changes in federal, state, or public policy or attitudes may also cause revision of this management framework plan.





MONTANA BLM ORGANIZATION

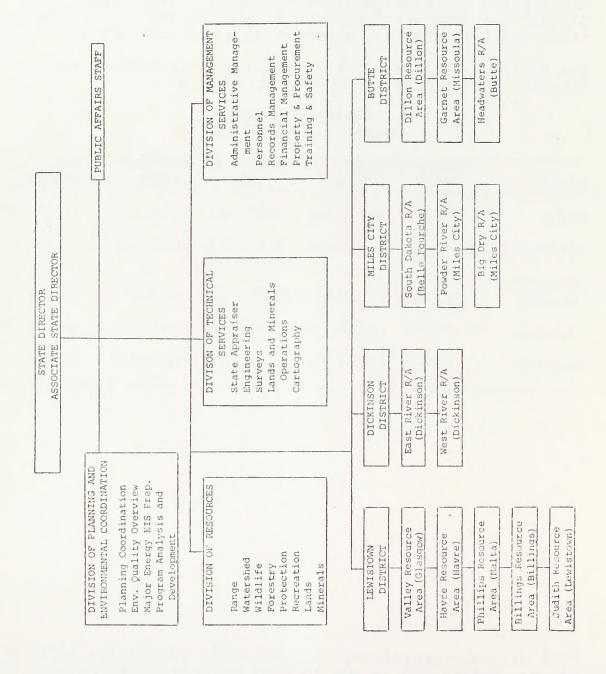
The Bureau's work in Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota is administered from a State Office headquarters located in Billings, Montana. Within these three states, the 8.4 million surface acres and 55 million* subsurface acres of public lands are further divided administratively into four districts with District Offices in Butte, Lewistown, and Miles City; and Dickinson, North Dakota. Each District is divided into Resource Areas to facilitate day to day administration and long term management on a multiple use basis.

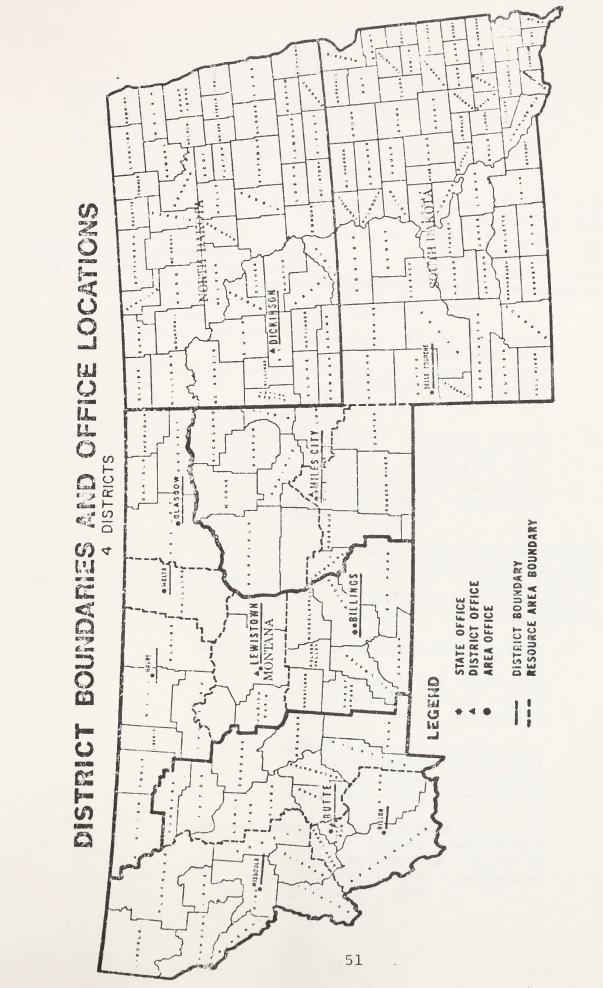
The surface and subsurface acreages administered by the four BLM Districts are noted in the table below:

ACREAGE STATISTICS
MONTANA BLM ORGANIZATION

	SURFACE OWNERSHIP		SUBSURFACE OWNERSHIP		TOTAL ALL	
DISTRICT	BLM	OTHER	BLM	OTHER	OWNERSHIP	
Butte	1,334,000	33,456,400	2,285,345	32,505,054	34,790,400	
Lewistown	3,884,701	33,167,885	8,177,983	28,879,603	37,057,586	
Miles City Montana	2,785,299	17,363,119	10,910,741	9,237,677	20,148,418	
S.Dakota	276,000	48,335,200	800,000	47,811,200	48,611,200	
Dickinson	68,000	44,266,720	4,968,000	39,366,720	44,334,720	

^{*}BLM directly administers approximately 28 million acres of mineral estate and is the leasing agent to an additional 27 million acres of land administered by other federal agencies.





ADDRESSES Montana BLM Organization

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Telephone: Com: 657-6561
FTS: 585-6561

Butte District Office
P.O. Box 308
220 North Alaska
Butte, Montana 59701
Telephone: Com: 723-6561

(Same address and phone number for Headwaters Resource Area)

FTS: 585-2416

Dillon Resource Area

Dillon Resource Area Headquarters P.O. Box 1048
Ibey Building, N. Dillon Dillon, Montana 59725
Telephone: Com: 683-2337

Garnet Resource Area Headquarters P.O. Box 4427
1819 Holborn
Missoula, Montana 59801
Telephone: Com: 329-3686
FTS: 585-3686

Lewistown District Office Bank Electric Building Drawer 1160 Lewistown, Montana 59457

Drawer 1160 (Same address and phone number Lewistown, Montana 59457 for Judith Resource Area)
Telephone: Com: 538-7461

Phillips Resource Area Headquarters P.O. Box B 501 South 2nd Street E Malta, Montana 59538 Telephone: Com: 654-1240

Valley Resource Area Headquarters 626 Third Avenue South Glasgow, Montana 59230 Telephone: Com: 228-4316

Billings Resource Area Headquarters 810 E. Main Street Billings, Montana 59101 Telephone: Com: 657-6262 FTS: 585-6262 Havre Resource Area Headquarters Post Office Building Drawer 911 Havre, Montana 59501 Telephone: Com: 265-5891

Miles City District Office P.O. Box 940
West of Miles City
Miles City, Montana 59310
Telephone: Com: 232-4331

(Same address and phone number for Powder River and Big Dry Resource Areas)

South Dakota Resource Area Headquarters 310 Roundup Street Belle Fourche, South Dakota 57717 Telephone: Com: 892-2526

Dickinson District Office P.O. Box 1229 Pulver Hall Dickinson, North Dakota 58601 Telephone: Com: 225-9148 AESTHETICS. Dealing with the sense of the beautiful and with judgments concerning beauty.

ALLOTMENT (GRAZING ALLOTMENT). An area of land where one or more individuals graze their livestock. It generally consists of BLM lands but may include parcels of private or state owned lands. The number of livestock and season(s) of use are stipulated for each allotment. An allotment may consist of several pastures or be only one pasture.

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN (AMP). A concisely written program of live-stock grazing management, including supportive measures if required, designed to attain specific management goals in a grazing allotment.

ANIMAL UNIT MONTH. A standardized unit of measurement of the amount of forage necessary for the complete sustenance of one animal unit for a period of one month; also a unit of measurement of grazing privileges which represents the privilege of grazing one animal unit for a period of one month.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SITE.

Site which contains objects of
antiquity or cultural values relating to history, or prehistory.

CRUCIAL WILDLIFE HABITAT. That portion of the living area of a wildlife species that is essential to the survival and perpetuation of the species, either as individuals or as a population.

CULTURAL RESOURCES. A term that includes resources of historical, archaeological, or architectural significance, which are fragile, limited, and nonrenewable portions of the human environment.

ENDANGERED OR THREATENED STATUS.

Determined for plants and animals by any one or a combination of the following factors: (1) the present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) overutilization for commercial, sporting, scientific or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the adequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or (5) other natural or man-made factors affecting its continued existence.

EROSION. The group of natural processes including weathering, dissolution, abrasion, corrosion, and transportation by which earthy or rocky material is removed from any part of the earth's surface.

EROSION CONDITION CLASS. Expression of current erosion activity using the following ratings (Soil Surface Factor): Stable \(^1_4\) 61-80; Slight \(^1_4\) 21-40; Moderate \(^1_4\) 41-60; Critical \(^1_4\) 61-80; Severe \(^1_4\) 81-100.

EXCHANGE. A transaction whereby the federal government receives land in exchange for other land and/or timber.

FEDERAL LANDS. All classes of land owned by the federal government.

FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976 (FLPMA). Public Law 94-579, October 21, 1976, often referred to as the BLM "Organic Act" which provides the majority of BLM's legislated authority, direction, policy and basic management guidance.

GRAZING LEASE. An authorization which permits the grazing of livestock on public lands outside grazing districts during a specified period of time (Section 15 of the Taylor Grazing Act).

GRAZING SYSTEM. A systematic sequence of NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER grazing use and nonuse of an allotment to reach identified multiple-use goals or objectives by improving the quality and quantity of the vegetation.

SYSTEM. Federal legislation of to protect and preserve rivers outstanding scenic, recreation natural, and cultural values.

HABITAT. A specific set of physical conditions that surround the single species, a group of species, or a large community. In wildlife management, the major components of habitat are considered to be food, water, cover, and living space.

INTENSITY OF USE. Amount of vegetation consumed by grazing herbivores, usually measured as a percentage of the annual growth.

LEK. The breeding grounds of prairie grouse species (i.e., sharptail dancing grounds, etc.).

LITTER. The uppermost layer of organic debris. It is composed of freshly fallen or slightly decomposed organic materials.

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN (MFP). A planning decision document which establishes, for a given planning area, land use allocations, coordination guidelines for multiple use, and management objectives to be achieved for each class of land use or protection. It is the Bureau's land use plan. It is prepared in three steps: Step 1 - Resource Recommendations; Step 2 - Impact Analysis and Alternative Development; and Step 3 - Decisionmaking.

NATIONAL REGISTER. The National Register of Historic Places, which is a register of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture, maintained by the Secretary of the Interior.

NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER
SYSTEM. Federal legislation designed
to protect and preserve rivers of
outstanding scenic, recreational,
natural, and cultural values. This
includes a 149 mile segment of the
Upper Missouri between Fort Benton
the the Fred Robinson Bridge (U.S.
Highway 191).

NON-DISCRETIONARY. Actions required by federal law, court, or Executive Order, i.e., protection of designated, endangered, or threatened plants and animals, protection of designated historical or archaeological sites, etc.

OVERGRAZING. Consumption of vegetation by herbivores beyond the endurance of a plant to survive.

PALEONTOLOGICAL SITE. Areas with known evidence of prehistoric forms of life (plant and animal fossils).

PARENT MATERIAL. The unconsolidated and more or less chemically weathered mineral or organic matter from which soil develops.

PLANNING UNIT. A geographic unit within a Bureau of Land Management district which includes related lands, resources, and use pressure problems which are considered together for resource inventory and planning.

PLANT VIGOR. The relative well being and health of a plant as reflected by its ability to manufacture sufficient food for growth and maintenance.

PRIMITIVE AREA. Area in which no commercial development or use is permitted and no routes for motorized transportation are developed.

PUBLIC LAND OR BLM LAND. Original public domain lands which have never left federal ownership; which were obtained by the government in exchange for public lands or for timber on public lands.

REST ROTATION GRAZING SYSTEM. A grazing system providing for systematic and sequential grazing by livestock and resting from livestock use on a range area to provide for the production of livestock while simultaneously maintaining or improving the vegetation and soil fertility.

ROTATION. A grazing system providing for sequential movement of livestock from one pasture to another to allow for regrowth of vegetation and maintenance of vegetative vigor.

SAWTIMBER. Trees that will yield logs suitable in size and quality for the production of lumber.

SUSTAINED YIELD. The achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the public lands consistent with multiple use.

VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (VRM) CLASSES. Classification of land-scapes according to the kinds of artificial structures and modifications which are acceptable to meet established visual goals.

VISUAL RESOURCES. The land, water, vegetation, animals, and other features that are visible on all BLM lands.

WATERSHED. The region draining into a river, river system, or body of water.

Form 1279-3
(June 1984)

HD

243
A combined summary
.M9
framework plans for
J82
1978

DATE
LOANED
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